



WHITE ROCK  
CONCERTS

SINCE 1956

===== 2024-2025 SEASON =====

**PENDERECKI  
STRING QUARTET**

SATURDAY, MARCH 15, 2025

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## BIOGRAPHY



### **Penderecki String Quartet**

Jeremy Bell, violin

Jerzy Kaplanek, violin

Christine Vlajk, viola

Katie Schlaikjer, cello

Celebrating their 38th anniversary, the Penderecki String Quartet is based in Waterloo, Ontario where they have been Quartet-in-Residence at Wilfrid Laurier University since 1991. Originating from Poland, Canada, and USA, they bring their varied yet collective experience to create performances that demonstrate their “remarkable range of technical excellence and emotional sweep” (Toronto Globe and Mail).

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## BIOGRAPHY (cont.)

The PSQ's international performing schedule has included appearances in New York (Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall), Amsterdam (Concertgebouw), Hong Kong (Academy for the Arts), Los Angeles (REDCAT Hall at Disney Center), St. Petersburg (Sheremetev Palace), the Adam Festival in New Zealand, and throughout Europe in Rome, Madrid, Paris, Belgrade, Prague, Krakow, Vilnius, and Zagreb.

The PSQ has also toured extensively in Mexico, Australia, Venezuela, Brazil, Colombia, and from coast to coast in Canada. The PSQ's large discography includes over three dozen recordings including the chamber music repertoire of Beethoven and Brahms as well as the first Canadian release of the six Béla Bartók quartets. Their disc of Marjan Mozetich's "Lament in the Trampled Garden" won the 2010 JUNO Award for Best Composition, and most recently they were nominated for a 2023 JUNO for their jazz album "Blue" with Diana Panton and Don Thompson.

In October 2013, the PSQ worked with Maestro Krzysztof Penderecki on his Third Quartet (2008) and performed it at Symphony Space in New York City on the occasion of his 80th birthday. This followed with the recording of Penderecki's Third Quartet along with quartets of Norbert Palej on the Marquis label. In 2022, the PSQ was featured in Howard Shore's soundtrack to David Cronenberg's film, "Crimes of the Future". Dedicated educators, the PSQ have been recent guests at Bloomington Indiana University's String Academy, the Beijing Conservatory, University of Southern California (Los Angeles), and with their partner universities in Osnabrück, Germany and Lyon, France.

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# PROGRAMME

## **String Quartet in C major, Op. 20, “Sun”, no. 2**

**Joseph Haydn**

*I. Moderato*

*II. Capriccio. Adagio - Cantabile*

*III. Menuetto. Allegretto - Trio*

*IV. Fuga a 4 soggetti. Allegro*

## **String Quartet No. 3 in B-flat Major, Op. 67**

**Johannes Brahms**

*I. Vivace*

*II. Andante*

*III. Agitato (Allegretto non troppo)*

*IV. Poco Allegretto con Variazioni*

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## INTERMISSION

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## **String Quartet G minor, Op. 10**

**Claude Debussy**

*I. Animé et très décidé*

*II. Assez vif et bien rythmé*

*III. Andantino, doucement expressif*

*IV. Très modéré – En animant peu à peu*

## PROGRAMME NOTES

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### **String Quartet in C major, Op. 20, no. 2**

Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)

In a bold assertion of Haydn's new style, the quartet opens with the cello singing out the main theme in its upper register while the first violin remains silent for the first six measures and the viola takes on the cello's traditional role of providing a bassline. The cello remains a key voice— matching the first violin in a duet during the development and adding a new richness to the movement's texture throughout. Haydn's focus on a truly ensemble-driven quartet develops even further in the dramatic *Adagio*. The cello once again takes a featured part throughout the *minuet* which arrives without pause from the *Adagio*'s closing chords. In the manuscript for this movement Haydn scribbled "*Sic fugit amicus amicum*" (Thus one friend flees another). This sentiment can, indeed, be felt throughout the *fugue*'s four simultaneous themes as the ensemble often takes on the sound of one part pursuing another only to divert in a new direction. Full of complex counterpoint and rich texture, the finale serves as a final, triumphant nod to the composer's new approach to the genre.

*Notes by Linton Chamber Music*

### **String Quartet No. 3 in B-flat Major, Op. 67**

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

Brahms composed this string quartet, his third, as a distraction from the more serious work on his Symphony No. 2, and it was introduced in Berlin in June 1876 by the Joachim Quartet. The opening *Vivace* presents a bucolic "hunting-horn" theme with light-hearted triplet rhythms. A serene, almost Schumann-like *Andante* follows, although not without some dramatic interruptions. In the third movement, a *minuet* marked *Agitato*, Brahms creates an unusual texture by muting the two violins and the cello. The unmuted viola leads the way, producing a haunting ensemble sonority. Brahms himself described the movement as "the tenderest and most impassioned I have ever written." The viola retains its prominence in the opening of the final movement before receding into the ensemble. During the course of eight variations, we witness the mastery Brahms could display in this most deceptively simple of musical forms. In his later years, Brahms looked back on Op. 67 as his favourite of his three string quartets.

*Adapted from notes by Dennis Bade, LA Philharmonic*

## PROGRAMME NOTES

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### String Quartet G minor, Op. 10

Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

With an uncanny ear for attractive melodies and harmonies, Debussy created an audaciously ultra-modern quartet with startlingly beautiful effects in lieu of sheer shock tactics. His fresh slant on musical architecture utilized the “cyclical” method advocated by Franz Liszt, and carried on by Franck and his disciples, a method characterized by the recurrence of certain themes or motifs throughout a work. Debussy combined this cyclical idea with a light-handed variation technique that carried his motto theme through subtle ongoing transformations — an approach that replaced the traditional contrast and development techniques, which had formed the crux of the Austro-Germanic thinking that had dominated European music since Haydn’s time.

The vigorous *motto* theme from which Debussy fashions the entire Quartet appears at the outset, cast in Phrygian mode. The lyrical second theme turns out to be a close relative to the principal theme itself. Then, a mosaic of miniature variations, based primarily on the second subject, replaces a true development section, while the recapitulation delivers further variations cloaked in a rich texture of shifting harmonies. Repetitious phrases lend a flavor of precocious minimalism to the beginning of the sonically stunning *scherzo* movement. The work concludes with a potent sample of the powerful, colourful string writing that sparked contemporary complaints that this vital quartet was “too orchestral.” The piece made its debut on December 29, 1893 at the Salle Pleyel in Paris with the prestigious Ysaÿe Quartet, to whom the work is dedicated.

*Notes from Kathy Henkel at the LA Philharmonic*

### LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

White Rock Concerts acknowledges that tonight’s concert is being held on the unceded traditional and ancestral territory of the Semiahmoo First Nation.

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We are grateful for their stewardship of the land for thousands of years before us and for the Elders’ teachings that remind us we are all connected.

## OUR NEXT CONCERT



### Pocket Symphonies

*with violinist Jasper Wood,  
cellist Joseph Elworthy,  
and the Bergmann Duo*

Saturday, April 26, 2025

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